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Security Council

Sixty-first year

Provisional

5413rd meeting

Tuesday, 18 April 2006, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Guangya	(China)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Peru	Mr. De Rivero
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Qahtani
	Russian Federation	Mr. Denisov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

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06-31300 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Salim A. Salim, African Union Special Envoy for the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on Darfur and Chief Mediator.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Salim to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members have before them the monthly report of the Secretary-General on Darfur, document S/2006/218.

I wish also to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2006/156, which contains a letter dated 10 March 2006 from the representative of the Congo addressed to the President of the Security Council.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Salim A. Salim, African Union Special Envoy for the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on Darfur and Chief Mediator.

I give the floor to Mr. Salim.

Mr. Salim: Let me begin by expressing my deep appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to your colleagues in the Council for having once again extended an invitation to me to come here to brief you on the status of the inter-Sudanese peace talks on the conflict in Darfur, the Sudan, which are currently taking place in Abuja, Nigeria. The fact that the Council has once again invited me to New York to address it clearly symbolizes the collective concern of the international community at the plight of the people of Darfur and the Council's determination to remain seized of the ongoing processes, especially the speedy and successful conclusion of the peace talks.

Since I last briefed the Council three months ago, there have been significant developments in the efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur. That agreement is clearly within our reach, despite the fact that a great deal of hard work still remains to be done.

We shall very shortly submit a set of compromise proposals representing fair and balanced options for bringing the conflict in Darfur to an end and putting in place the necessary mechanisms for ensuring that, ultimately, a just and lasting peace can prevail in that troubled land.

On 6 April last, I had the opportunity to brief the African Union Peace and Security Council meeting in Addis Ababa and to participate in a constructive discussion on how best to sustain the momentum of the process. My personal assessment after the meeting is that Africa is waiting impatiently for a political and negotiated resolution of the conflict in Darfur. The subsequent visit to Abuja of Mr. Denis Sassou-Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo and current Chairman of the African Union (AU), on 8 and 9 April last was a tangible manifestation of that preoccupation and reflected the determination of Africa to assist our mediation efforts. Meanwhile, our host in Nigeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo, continues to support us fully.

Taken together, these facts demonstrate clearly the genuine desire of the leaders — and, indeed, of Africa as a whole — to do their utmost to address the problems in Darfur. In this, there is a happy convergence between the Council and Africa.

When I last briefed the Council in January, I expressed my frustration at the agonizingly slow pace of the negotiations and the apparent lack of confidence among the parties. This time around, I should like to state that the situation is evolving, though not as fast as we would have wished. We continue to be hampered by the unwillingness or inability of the parties to offer significant concessions and by the deep distrust and mutual suspicion that pervades the relations among them. As we enter the home stretch of this marathon negotiating session, the anxieties of the parties are, understandably, intensifying. We can therefore expect further frustrating hesitation as they contemplate compromise and agreement, and, in more general

terms, what the future holds for them and their respective constituencies.

By the time I left Abuja last Saturday, we had gradually and systematically exhausted all the arguments on the key issues of power-sharing and wealth-sharing baskets. Most notably, I had the impression that we might be able to make some progress in the negotiations on security arrangements, such that the final — and, arguably, the most important — piece of the jigsaw puzzle, the final status issues, could be presented in the near future.

During the past few days, the Vice-President of the Sudan, Mr. Ali Osman Taha, was with us in Abuja at the head of a high-powered delegation of the Government of National Unity of the Sudan. As a matter of fact, I had to — most reluctantly — leave Mr. Taha in Abuja because of my prior and twice-postponed commitment to brief the Council. The Vice-President's visit has been extremely helpful in moving the process forward. All the leaders of the Darfur movements were also present, together with their senior advisers, when I left. For the first time, there are intensive bilateral and direct discussions between the parties, as well as meetings facilitated by the mediation, which followed the momentum provided by the initiative of President Sassou-Nguesso and President Obasanjo. The conflict in Darfur, which has caused so much suffering and bloodshed, seems at last to be ripe for resolution, and we in the African Union mediation are prepared to take the parties into that difficult and sensitive final stretch in the coming weeks.

On a related issue, I wish to commend the First Vice- President of the Sudan, Mr. Salva Kiir, and the leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) for the engagement of their representatives in and the facilitation of the process alongside Vice President Ali Osman Taha in Abuja. Their deep insights, broad experience and forward-looking ideas have proved very helpful in providing confidence to the movements and a much-needed momentum for the talks.

I am personally convinced that we are now in a position to present a far-reaching set of proposals to the parties before the end of April, as urged by the AU Peace and Security Council and the Security Council only a few days ago. Such proposals will cover the issues of power- sharing, wealth-sharing, security arrangements and the Darfur-Darfur dialogue and consultations, as well as implementation mechanisms and modalities.

At the centre of our proposals is a formula for power- sharing. Here we have listened to the parties exhaustively on a set of issues concerning Darfur's representation in the presidency, the National Executive and National Assembly, the status of Darfur within the Sudan, and the makeup of Darfur's three state governments. That also applies to the issue of fair representation for Darfurians in the Sudan's national institutions and the commissions envisaged under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The Government of the Sudan is beginning to show some flexibility on those issues, and we are hopeful that the differences can be narrowed. We need the movements to head in the same direction as we strive to address their concerns. The mediation proposals will be informed by the flexibility indicated by the Government and by our understanding of both the movements' legitimate fears and the aspirations of Darfurians in general, as well as the imperative of finding a just and lasting formula to resolve the problems that are at the heart of this terrible conflict in the Sudan.

In submitting the proposals, we remain guided, first and foremost, by the principle of fairness. We are committed to ensuring that we do not submit any proposal for power-sharing that does not enable the people of Darfur to enjoy fair and effective representation in the Sudan's national institutions with a view to ending their marginalization.

On wealth-sharing, there are four outstanding issues: the assistance to be provided to internally displaced persons and refugees to enable them to restart their livelihoods, the formula for transfers from the national Government to the states, the seed money for the Darfur reconstruction and development fund, and the compensation for communities and individuals who have been victims of the conflict. The compensation and the money for the Darfur fund are two of the most controversial. Nevertheless, we remain convinced that, with political will and commitment by the parties, all of those issues can be resolved without further delay.

Security lies at the heart of Darfur's crisis. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that security arrangements will make or break the negotiations in

Abuja. Let us be clear: the war in Darfur is not a conventional war between contending armies, or even a war between conventional State armed forces and a guerrilla movement. Darfur is home to a myriad of armed and dangerous militias, including the Janjaweed, armed movements that are fragmenting, bandits of sorts, foreign combatants and tribal forces. Security arrangements, both for an immediate ceasefire and for long-term final status arrangements, are a complex undertaking.

Our mediation team has made proposals on issues such as the disengagement of forces, redeployment, disarmament of the Janjaweed, control and neutralization of militias, policing and enhancing the security of the camps for internally displaced persons, security of nomadic migration corridors and the demilitarization of humanitarian supply routes. Each of those issues requires decisions by the parties if there is to be forward movement so that, at the end of the day, we can achieve a workable ceasefire. There is no quick fix or easy process.

However, I am pleased to report that we have started making progress — albeit slow — in some aspects of the security arrangement negotiations. Some of the proposals under consideration are innovative and should make a real difference to enhancing stability and security for people on the ground. The challenge is to take with us the parties — particularly the movements — that harbour a deep and unyielding distrust of the real intentions of the Government and of its sincerity to implement what will be agreed.

Our efforts and those of the international community to provide assurances and guarantees to the movements have yet to yield the desired results in the form of a speedy movement towards an agreement.

The proposed enhanced ceasefire agreement stipulates that the control and the neutralization of the Janjaweed and undisciplined militias is a prerequisite if there is to be a ceasefire and a peace agreement for Darfur. Those steps must be in sequence with various stages of the implementation of the enhanced ceasefire agreement. One of the assurances that we have factored into the agreement is that each of those steps will have to be monitored and verified by the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). It is only after each step is satisfactorily completed that the movements would be obliged to take the reciprocal steps of withdrawing and redeploying their forces and accepting limited arms control.

In the discussions on the comprehensive security arrangements, which are about to start in Abuja — they will begin as soon as we conclude the ceasefire negotiations — we are also linking the final disarmament of the Janjaweed and militia forces to the assembling of the movements' forces. Similarly, the parallel processes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration should go together with the process of the integration of former combatants of the movements into Sudan's armed forces and other security services on the basis of criteria to be agreed to by the parties as part of a comprehensive package.

As the security arrangement negotiations progress, we are drawing attention to the challenges of implementing a future agreement, with all of the responsibilities that that will impose on the African Union and the United Nations. The Force Commander of the African Union Mission in the Sudan is currently designing a detailed implementation plan for how he should redeploy his forces to undertake the considerable additional tasks that will arise in the context of the agreement. Clearly, there will be many complex tasks that will have to be performed by AMIS during the early stages of the implementation of the envisaged ceasefire, including verifying force positions on the ground, monitoring the disengagement and redeployment and patrolling demilitarized zones and humanitarian supply routes. In particular, I would like to draw the attention of the Council to the important role that will have to be played by the AMIS civilian police in monitoring and policing additional locations in Darfur and in building up a community police capacity where it is non-existent.

The African heads of State are ready to assist us with their personal engagement and to contribute troops to Darfur to keep the peace. I am here to plead with the Council to extend maximum support to AMIS to ensure that the ceasefire agreement, once signed, is followed up by the upgrading, capacitation and empowerment of AMIS so as to enable it to cope with the additional responsibilities. I need hardly recall the point — which is repeatedly made — that AMIS, as presently constituted, is not optimally equipped to fulfil its mandate. That problem will become even more acute with the added responsibility that will come with a comprehensive ceasefire agreement.

There is no point in calling for the speedy conclusion of an agreement if nothing is done to appropriately prepare AMIS for its expanded mandate. My plea to the Council is not to wait for the transition from AMIS to the United Nations force to take place before strengthening the implementation mechanisms of any agreement to be reached in Abuja. Institutional and bureaucratic arguments must be avoided and real planning done on how to help AMIS in concrete terms. There is too much at stake in Darfur to adopt a business-as-usual approach.

The enhanced ceasefire agreement for Darfur currently before the parties is, to all intents and purposes, a ceasefire. It is a road map that covers three quarters of the journey to a comprehensive security arrangements agreement. All of the parties are understandably reluctant to sign on to that ceasefire and embark upon that road until they are sure of the end state. Thus, even as we continue our negotiations on the modalities of the ceasefire, we are seriously engaged in exploring the central issues of the final status of forces, as well as issues of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. We have no illusions, however, that a comprehensive Darfur peace agreement, signed in Abuja, will be the end of the road. There are many years of painstaking work ahead of the people of Darfur — and of their friends in Africa and in the world at large — if they are to restore the social fabric of their damaged communities.

The conflict in Darfur requires that we lay the foundation for reconciliation to take place at the community level. To that end, I am happy to inform the Council that we have initiated a process of preparation for the Darfur-Darfur dialogue and consultations. The Council will recall that last year the parties agreed that, after a formal peace agreement has been signed, the people of Darfur should have the opportunity to come together to share and own such an agreement, in order to deepen and strengthen peacebuilding confidence, as well as to work towards communal reconciliation. We shall shortly be putting our final proposals for that process on the table for consideration and possible adoption by the parties.

Even though the African Union will continue to play a leading role in the political aspects of the peace process and the implementation of the envisaged agreement, the role of our partners will also be important in providing all-round support and encouragement, especially the huge financial, logistics and human resources burdens and expertise, not only for the dialogue itself, but also for assisting in the implementation of the agreements reached. We believe that the healing process in Darfur must begin immediately after a peace agreement is signed, but let us not expect it to be a quick process. The challenge of peacebuilding and reconciliation in Darfur will require our consistent collective engagement well beyond the conclusion of the Abuja talks.

On 10 March 2006, the African Union Peace and Security Council adopted a resolution indicating that it wished to see a comprehensive Darfur peace agreement before the end of this month. We are working full steam ahead to meet that deadline. Certainly, we shall put our proposals on the table in the coming days. The presence of Vice-President Ali Osman Taha and the SPLM delegation has certainly provided additional momentum to the process. The presence of the leaders of the movements in Abuja is also an encouraging sign and a sine qua non for a successful resolution of the conflict. I sincerely hope that they will remain in Abuja, in dialogue, without a break, and in spite of the distractions and diversions that have reappeared in the past week.

Our progress has been facilitated by the support of the partners, who continue to be well represented. We consult them at every turn. Our friend Mr. Jan Pronk, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, is a frequent visitor to Abuja and his team is intimately involved in all aspects of our work. I pay tribute to his energy and dedication. These partnerships have been instrumental to the progress we have made thus far. They will be even more instrumental as we move towards implementing the agreement subsequently reached.

I would like to personally express, as an African, my appreciation for and satisfaction with the continued attention and support that we have been receiving from Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the United Nations family. For me, since I was privileged to have participated in the process of United Nations reform, that kind of continued engagement by the United Nations with a regional organization- is gratifying. I am happy to be part of a concrete manifestation of it with respect to our common efforts to resolve the conflict in Darfur. The challenges for this Council include not only to continue being seized of the crisis of today and our peace process, which is still

incomplete, but also to seek ways of engaging with the post-conflict challenges that lie ahead.

I hope that this Council will also continue to help the Republic of Chad and the Sudan to find a solution to the problems that have been developing for quite some time now. While we unequivocally support the Tripoli Agreement, it remains our hope that everything will be done to contain the problems identified, as most of them have some direct bearing on the efforts we are making in Abuja, as the negotiations for a ceasefire agreement have revealed.

In conclusion, I leave the Council with the message once again that we are in the final stretch of concluding the Darfur peace agreement. The mediation is ready and, we believe, the time is right for the parties to move beyond arguments to decisions. I am confident that, once we table our proposals, we shall receive the unequivocal support of the United Nations and the encouragement of this Council to the parties to sign on to the package without delay.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Salim for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall now invite Council members to a private meeting to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.